



# Emergency Management Issues Special Interest Group Annual Meeting

## HazMatIQ

An Alternative Method for Hazmat  
Rescue Entries

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Going for Gold

# HazMatIQ

In the early days of hazmat response, entries were made without proper personal protective equipment (PPE) and detection equipment.

This resulted in the responders becoming victims and even being killed in some cases as a result of exposure.

# HazMatIQ

Standards were developed over the years, applying rigid requirements for entry into hazmat scenes.

These changes were designed to protect the responders and control entry processes.

The rescue of viable patients became a lengthy process, which possibly contributed to loss of life.

# HazMatIQ

This became even more complicated for emergency service agencies providing hazmat technician-level services that were also first responders to the scene.

There was no easy way to perform rescue entries in a reasonable amount of time without bypassing standards and requirements.

# HazMatIQ

Most first responders don't arrive already prepared for a technician-level entry, as this is normally a tiered response.

Crews arriving are generally trained to an Awareness or Operations level and have been limited on rescue options prior to arrival of the technician team.

# HazMatIQ

Many departments utilized an upwind/uphill approach during structural fire responses to facilitate a quick rescue.

Most did not utilize detection instruments for these first responder rescue activities.

# HazMatIQ

First responders needed a system that allowed rapid entry (when possible) and still afforded an element of safety, while saving the victims that could be saved.

The system needed to bridge the gap between first arriving, first responders, and a technician-level hazmat mitigation team.

# HazMatIQ

Several years ago, two of our firefighters attended a HazMatIQ class, and upon returning to shift, they met with me to discuss what they had learned.

We began investigating the system and thought it would fit our operation.

# HazMatIQ

Another class was sponsored by one of the local fire departments (in the Las Vegas valley) and several of our hazmat technicians attended.

Their opinions of the class echoed what the first two firefighters told me.

# HazMatIQ

HazMatIQ provides a method of simplifying hazard research, instrument selection, and PPE decisions necessary for performing rescues and line-of-sight reconnaissance entries when responding to structural fires.

The hazmat teams in the Las Vegas valley were adopting the HazMatIQ method, and several other organizations in Nevada were also considering this new tool.

# HazMatIQ

We began a collaborative effort with the State Fire Marshal's Office and Nye County Emergency Services to bring a series of HazMatIQ classes to our site.

Our site is centrally located and would draw responders from agencies in several counties.

# HazMatIQ

The State Fire Marshal approved the request from Nye County (sponsoring agency) to fund the HazMatIQ classes and scheduled the training event.

We received approval to be the “host department,” and made arrangements to hold the training sessions in our large classroom at the new fire station in Mercury.

# HazMatIQ

A student list was provided to us by the State Fire Marshal, and we processed visitor requests through the security organization.

Each class consisted of one 8-hour day, and five classes were conducted.

Eleven organizations participated, with a total of 120 students trained over five days.

# HazMatIQ

Several Department of Defense firefighters from a nearby air force base (mutual aid partner) attended the training and subsequently have planned additional HazMatIQ classes for their organizations.

# HazMatIQ

We are currently in the process of developing site-specific procedures and protocols for implementing HazMatIQ.

Our concept is to utilize this method for the first arriving crews, mainly for rescue operations.

Once the life-safety actions are complete, we will shift to technician-level mitigation actions incorporating the formal entry plans, medical evaluations of entry and back-up teams, establishment of a formal decontamination corridor, etc.

# HazMatIQ

We purchased rugged cases for each heavy rescue vehicle to house all necessary HazMatIQ-specific detection equipment and IQ Cards to segregate rescue/line-of-sight entry equipment from technician-level supply stores.

**HazMatIQ**

***HazMatIQ Demonstration***

Jeff Borkowski

# HazMatIQ

**Questions?**